(c) There have been a variety of reasons for this which, *inter alia*, include difficulties of geographical location and repeated natural calamities; lack of basic infrastructure in almost all the major sectors of connectivity (road, rail, air, inland waterways, telecommunication) as well as Power, Health, Education, Tourism, etc., inadequate, entrepreneurship, capacity and internal resource generation for undertaking projects; lack of sufficient employment opportunities etc.

(d) To address the problem of economic backwardness of the North East Region (NER), the Government of India have initiated various special measures. Not withstanding the fact that the North-East Region comprises only 4% of the country's population and about 8 % of its geographical area all Central Government Ministries, except for those exempted, are required to make a provision of, and spend at least 10% of their Plan budget for the North Eastern States, with a view to accelerating growth process in the Region and undoing the gap between NER and other parts of the country. The unspent balance out of this mandatory provision of 10% does not lapse and is credited to a notional pool called Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), which is used for creating infrastructure through various socio-economic development projects in the NER. Secondly, the North Eastern States, including Sikkim, are covered under the special category States under which their Annual Plans are funded on basis of 90:10 (grant: loan) whereas for non-special category States, the funding pattern is 30:70 (grant: loan). Besides, the Border Area Development Programme (BADP), the Hill Area Development Programme (HADP) and the North Eastern Council (NEC) also fund or implement development projects in the Region.

Dumping of garbage and chemical waste in India

†471. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is becoming dumping ground for the world and every year one hundred and five (105) countries are dumping their garbage and chemical waste in india;

(b) whether environment of India is not being adversely affected due to this dumping and if so, the action taken by Government during the last three year in this regard;

(c) whether Government have prepared any project to contain the poisonous gases produced by this garbage and also their ill-effects; and

(d) the quantity of garbage produced in the country itself and out of this the extent of total garbage which is recycled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) As per the Export and Import Policy, 2004-2009, amended from time to time and the Hazardous Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989 amended 2000 and 2003, import of garbage and chemical waste respectively for dumping are prohibited. No report of such

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

dumping has been received by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Further as per the Municipal Social Wastes (Management and Handling) rules 2000, bio-degradable wastes which produce methane are not permitted to be disposed off in landfills. No project to utilize methane has been prepared by this Ministry.

(d) As per the Manual prepared by the Ministry of Urban Development, the estimated municipal solid wastes generation in the country is hundred thousand tones per day, of which about 20% is recycled.

Schemes for cleaning of water in rivers

472. DR M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had implemented schemes for cleaning of water of various rivers in the country during the last two decades;

(b) if so, the names of such rivers and the amount spent on schemes formulated for cleaning of water of each river;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the water of above said rivers has become even more polluted after introduction and completion of the said schemes; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The works of pollution abatement in rivers started with the launching of the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) Phase-I in the year 1985 which was completed in March 2000. Subsequently, GAP Phase-II (GAP-II) was approved in stages from 1993 onwards which included the works on the tributaries of the river Ganga namely, Yamuna, Gomti, Damodar and Mahananda. The programme was broad based in 1995 and renamed as the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) which presently covers 160 towns along identified polluted stretches of 34 major rivers spread over 20 States at an approved cost of Rs. 4783 crore. The rivers covered under the Plan, and the river-wise expenditure incurred till March, 2007 is given in the Statement (See below).

(c) and (d) Conservation of rivers through pollution abatement works is a continuous activity under NRCP and are aimed towards ameliorating the water quality in rivers. With the pollution abatement works completed so far in both the phases under GAP, the water quality of the river Ganga has shown discernible improvement at major locations over its pre-GAP quality as per the water quality monitoring undertaken by independent reputed institutions of the country. Also, as per an independent evaluation study conducted by University of Bath, and Metroeconomica, United Kingdom and the Institute of Economic Growth, New Delhi, published in the year 2000, the Ganga Action Plan compares favourably, both in terms of cost and time taken, with those of other major rivers of the world like Thames, Rhine, Danube etc. A total of sewage treatment capacity of 1747 mld. (million litres per day) has been created so far for Ganga and its tributaries namely, Yamuna, Gomti, Damodar and Mahananda. As regards Yamuna, the tributary of Ganga, the quality of river water has not shown the desired improvement owing to the large gap between the demand and the availability of the sewage treatment capacity particularly in Delhi, and lack of availability of fresh water for ensuring minimum flow in the river.